

I AM NAVY MEDICINE: DR. JEFFERY B. COLE

By Dr. Jeffrey B. Cole, deputy chief operating officer and medical director, Tidewater Military Health System



PORTSMOUTH, Va. – I have the honor of being the deputy chief operating officer and medical director for the Tidewater Military Health System—an integrated medical market consisting of Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, U.S. Air Force Hospital Langley and McDonald Army Health Center. My job is to help further the Navy’s mission of readiness by helping these three distinct military treatment facilities improve access to care, remove unnecessary redundancies, reduce variations in care to ultimately improve patient experiences while maintaining fiscal efficiencies in a resource constrained environment.

I provide the physician perspective for the Tidewater management team, having spent significant time as a practicing general internist at the two largest military treatment facilities (NMCP and Langley). Together, our efforts help maintain the health and medical readiness of the 227,000 local patients and operational forces who receive care at one of the Tidewater facilities.

Being part of Navy Medicine has allowed me to work with some of the best and most competent, creative and caring people I have ever known, and has continually kept me both challenged and interested.

I also have the privilege of being a clinical professor of medicine at Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, a position few clinicians not directly attached to the campus in Bethesda, Maryland have the opportunity to attain. ^

I joined the Navy in 1980 because I was provided the opportunity to teach—something I clearly love doing. I was recruited out of Los Angeles to be an instructor at Naval Nuclear Power School in Orlando, Florida. I went from there to be a nuclear engineer at Naval Sea Systems Command

I had always wanted to be a physician and teacher. And after eight years as a Naval officer, I was accepted into USUHS in 1988, before internship and residency in internal medicine at the National Naval Medicine Center in Bethesda, Maryland, graduating in 1995. Upon my retirement, after another 18 years on active duty, I became a contract general internist at Langley in Hampton, Virginia, before assuming my current civilian role with the Tidewater MHS.

Outside of work, I'm passionate about the loved ones in my life. I also enjoy giving back to the community by remaining clinically active and clinically relevant, in addition to continuing to teach medical students, interns, residents and of course, caring for my patients.

I am Dr. Jeff Cole, and I am Navy Medicine.